THINK Lesson Plan  
  
**Conceptual Goals**

1. Help students differentiate between informal (social) language and formal (academic or professional) language.

2. Help students to consider audience when writing and how different audiences will elicit different types of writing.

3. Help students write in real-world settings. They will need to be aware of formatting expectations, grammatical expectations, etiquette expectations, etc.

**Lesson Objectives**  
1. Students will learn the parts of a business letter in order to practice format/etiquette for professional writing.

2. Students will write their own business letter in order to apply formatting, grammatical, and etiquette skills to context-appropriate writing.

3. Students will discuss the difference between a business letter and a letter to a friend in order to differentiate between when it is appropriate to use levels of formality in language.  
  
**Standards**

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.4](http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/W/11-12/4/) Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.1d](http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/W/11-12/1/d/) Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing.

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.5](http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/W/11-12/5/) Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience.

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.6](http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/W/11-12/6/) Use technology, including the Internet, to produce, publish, and update individual or shared writing products in response to ongoing feedback, including new arguments or information.

**Materials**

White board  
Lab computers (one for each student)  
Department printer

**Lesson**

1. Introduce lesson

* Tell students what we will be doing today
* As a motivational device, ask them how many of them plan to go to college or enter the work force in the next few months.
* Then ask them if they have ever written a business letter.
* Explain to them that this, and other types of professional writing, is something they will need to be able to do as they move on from high school and into the “real world”.

1. Instruct students on the format of a business letter

* 6 parts of a business letter: Date (Heading), Inside Address, Salutation, Body, Closing, Printed Name,
* Explain that letter is in block format, which means left-side alignment.
* Explain spacing: 2 spaces in between everything but the closing and the printed name (to leave room for a signature).
* Fill out a mock letter together

1. Give assignment

* Explain to students what content they will be expected to write today.
* Students will pretend as though they are applying to a job, college/university, or writing to a department head in the field of study they wish to enter.
* Students will need to write about their experience at Shamokin High School and how at least three different experiences have made them a great candidate for the position/field.
* Remind students that they are to treat this as an actual letter to a potential employer, professor, etc., which means they must consider things like word choice, grammar, format, level of formality, and appropriate tone.
* Explain to students that even if they do not feel as though their experience at Shamokin was entirely positive, that they must consider what their purpose in writing is for this assignment (to obtain a job) and make sure that their writing aligns with their purpose.

1. Reflect

* After their business letters are printed, gather them for group discussion.
* Ask students to take a minute and think about how their business letter might be different from, for example, a letter to a friend.
* Ask them to consider how they would change their word choices, their grammar, their level of formality, and their content if they were writing not to an employer or professor but to a good friend.
* Have students discuss as a class what these differences might look like.
* Also discuss what students chose to include and exclude in terms of content and why.

1. Closing

* Explain to students that audience really affects how we write and how we think about writing. If we are writing to a friend, our language might be a bit less formal than if we were writing to a potential employer or professor.
* Explain to students that different situations call for different types of action, and they should keep this in mind when they make choices about language. For example, it is okay to use “Shamokinisms” when talking with friends from Shamokin, but they probably want to stay away from certain colloquialisms when writing professionally.
* The key is differentiation.

**Homework**

* Students must consider their audience and their purpose for writing as they finish up their research papers. If they need to go back and change anything in terms of formality, content, grammar, format, etc., they should do this with our discussion about differentiation in mind. Research papers will be turned in on Tuesday, May 7th.

**Assessment**

* Formative:
* We will walk around and assist students while they are writing their business letters. If any student is having trouble with any part, we will personally guide them and if enough of them are having trouble, we will stop and redirect their attention to the board to review the instructions of the assignment. We will also walk around and make sure that the content of their letters is relevant to the assignment. They are allowed to write about whatever they want, but they are supposed to be keeping their audience in mind, which are their potential future employers.
* Summative:
* Students will turn in a typed business letter and we will be looking for: proper formatting, content appropriateness, grammar, spelling.